

PhD Degree and Creative Works: Guidelines for Examiners

The PhD degree is awarded on the basis of a substantial piece of original research conducted under proper academic supervision and within a research environment.

In the creative arts, a PhD thesis may take the form of a performance and/or a corpus of creative work together with a dissertation that addresses, elucidates and contextualises the work, or provides scholarly analysis pertinent to the research question being addressed. On occasion, the thesis may adopt a 'hybrid' approach in which the creative and critical strands are intertwined.

The dissertation and the creative work (when they are not intertwined as described above) are considered as complementary parts of a single project and, though separable, are examined as an integrated whole. The dissertation should not be a simple description of the creative work or a reflective journal on the creative process. While it may include information on the materials and methodology used and place the creative in an artistic, intellectual and/or cultural context, the dissertation must answer to the requirement of every PhD research thesis that it makes an original contribution to knowledge.

The format of the creative work component of the thesis will be agreed between the candidate and supervisor, approved by the Head of School at confirmation, and made available to examiners.

Criteria for examination of creative work

Examiners are asked to consider whether the candidate:

- has identified a research question or questions that are explored through the creative work;
- demonstrates an advanced level of familiarity with and understanding of contemporary work in the field;
- demonstrates a high standard of literacy in the relevant artistic form;
- employs methods and techniques in execution that are appropriate to the subject matter and that are original and/or aesthetically effective;
- has presented their work in a professional manner (where appropriate).

Where the creative work includes elements of performance, design or exhibition, it must be documented (including any catalogue or programme material) to a standard that will ensure the work provides a reference for subsequent researchers.

The thesis (that is, the creative work and the dissertation together) must:

- constitute a significant original contribution to knowledge in the subject area with which it deals;
- demonstrate an appropriate and substantiated connection between its constituent parts.

Examiners are advised that they may ask for revisions of any aspect of the thesis if they consider that it does not meet the expected level of scholarship. They may ask that critical or exegetical sections be revised or re-written; equally, they may ask that creative works be "revised" in a way that is appropriate to that discipline.